

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY: NEA/ARN:GDSTRONG

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R 222133Z JUL 74

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS

XMT AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

UNCLAS STATE 158569

INFORM CONSULS

FOLLOWING REPEAT DAMASCUS 1458 ACTION DEPT JULY 22ND

QUOTE

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 1458

SECSTATE PLEASE PASS TO ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OTRA, SY

SUBJECT: SHORTAGE OF HOTEL SPACE DAMASCUS

1. AT PRESENT AND UNTIL AT LEAST MID SEPTEMBER 1974
DAMASCUS IS FACED WITH ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE SITUATION
REGARDING HOTEL SPACE. THIS DUE TO THE FOLLOWING
REASONS:

A. WITH DAMASCUS INTERNATIONAL FIR COMMENCING
JULY 25 ALL RPT ALL HOTEL SPACE, DOWN TO THE
LOWEST QUALITY HOTEL, IS COMPLETELY BOOKED.

B. POST ANTICIPATES LARGE INFLUX OF TOURIST THIS
YEAR WHICH WILL FURTHER CUT INTO ANY HOTEL

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ACCOMODATIONS THAT COULD BE AVAILABLE.

2. IN VIEW ABOVE TRAVELERS ARE REQUESTED TO NOT RPT NOT TRAVEL TO DAMASCUS UNLESS HOTEL RESERVATIONS ARE CONFIRMED. EVEN THIS SOMETIMES PROVES UNFORTUNATE SINCE HOTELS HAVE BEEN KNOWN TO CANCEL CONFIRMED RESERVATIONS.

3. EMBASSY ADVISES THAT FOR THE CASUAL TRAVELER IT WOULD BE BEST TO ONLY VISIT DAMASCUS DURING THE DAY AND RETURN TO BEIRUT FOR OVERNIGHT ACCOMODATIONS.

4. FOR OFFICIAL TRAVELERS REQUESTING EMBASSY ASSISTANCE EVERY EFFORT MUST BE MADE TO GIVE MAXIMUM ADVANCE NOTIFICATION IN ORDER TO ALLOW EMBASSY TO ATTEMPT TO ACQUIRE NECESSARY HOTEL ACCOMODATIONS. TODAY (22 JUL) POST HAS BEEN UNSUCCESSFUL IN LOCATING EVEN ONE HOTEL ROOM IN DAMASCUS FOR VIP ARRIVING LATER THIS WEEK. EVERY HOTEL CONTACTED SAID NO RPT NO ROOMS AVAILABLE UNTIL AFTER DAMASCUS INTERNATIONAL FAIR (25 AUG 1974)

5. ALTHOUGH THE SITUATION WILL ABATE AFTER MID SEPTEMBER POST CONTINUES TO SEE CRITICAL HOTEL SPACE SHORTAGE IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.
SCOTES
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